

Research in Progress Abstract - Construction Practice (Non-Pedagogical Content)

Why Are NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) So Inefficient and Ineffective?

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This research is a case study in-progress that is defining efficiency of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) entering into a developing country whose specific needs include construction of infrastructure. Around the world, there are thousands of Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) strategically placed in some of the poorest areas working to better the lives of two-thirds of the world's population living off of less than \$1 a day. So the question lingers... if there are that many organizations with money out there, then how are they not being more effective? This case study will be a partnership with SIFAT (Servants in Faith and Technology) and will entail entering into a remote village in Ecuador to follow the five steps of efficiently partnering with a community to develop their infrastructure needs. These five steps include: (1) Financial Establishment of the NGO - assuring a sufficient amount of financial backing to ensure the correct amount of finances are in order prior to entering into the community (2) Building a Relationship with the Community and its Leaders – this is one of the more intricate processes that is crucial to the success of the entire project, trust is a key part of this and must be established early. Bringing together different cultures is complicated and the leaders must trust that their best interest is at heart here, which leads directly into the next step (3) Working with the Community to determine the *Felt Needs* – this involves working with the community and its leaders to determine what exactly would best benefit the community, i.e. building wells or water pump systems, constructing a school, or developing a community plan to re-invent where waste is distributed (4) Coming alongside the community to give them the tools/knowledge to utilize the natural resources and labor – it is critical for the NGOs to not just *give* this project away whether it is through labor, materials or both. For a community to be sustainable on their own, and to succeed after the NGO has left, the community needs to take ownership of the project. This includes figuring a way to use only the natural resources in the area to construct the project, and provide training to expand the community's knowledge of the project. (5) Withdraw from the community and allow them to succeed on their own with the tools and knowledge the NGO has provided – the final step will allow the community to become sustainable and succeed on their own with the skills and knowledge the NGO has provided the community. It is very important to step away from the community, so that there is no dependency on the NGO at the end or developed during the project. Through these five steps, this case study will demonstrate an effective procedure for NGOs to follow, avoid community dependency, and reduce shortcomings for work in developing countries.

Key Words: International Development, NGO, Aid, Communities, Developing Countries